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Program Will Train "Generic" Mechanics

Because servicing dealers are often frustrated in the search for competent mechanics, the National Equipment Servicing Dealers Assn. plans to offer "generic" training courses aimed at the small-engine business but teaching many skills transferable to all levels of mobile machinery.

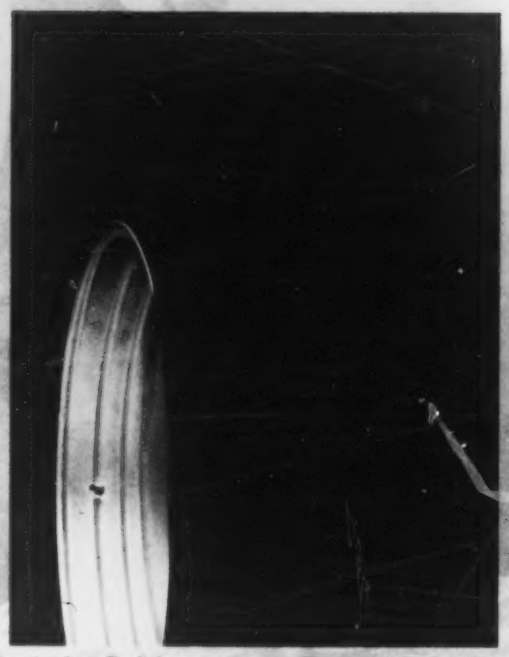
"An entry-level trainee has little chance of obtaining a general overview of procedures in the service industry," says a news release on the program from NESDA Executive Director Norman Beck. ". . . the servicing dealer who funds a trainee's learning experience is almost immediately in jeopardy of losing that employee to 'greener pastures.' These problems are real. They are significant. To some, they are overwhelming."

Having had negative experience with public school programs, the release said, "many of NESDA's people now feel it is necesary to find solutions elsewhere. Today's public schools are often mired down with internal politics, ambitious social agendas, and a lack of performance accountability. This industry has few alternatives but to solve its own problems with its own aggressive efforts.

"NESDA believes the job can be done. NESDA believes that it is uniquely positioned to lead the effort. NESDA, not affiliated with any brand, can call upon all brand suppliers to assist in specific ways as it delivers a 'generic' program in major regional areas. Many cooperative suppliers could contribute facilities, materials, people and possibly even funding."

Suppliers, dealers and individuals with an interest in the project are asked to contact Norman Beck, Executive Director, NESDA, PO Box 2116, Peoria, AZ 85380-2116. NESDA's phone number is (602) 566-0997.

THIS IS THE REASON YOU'LL SWITCH TO RADIALS.



THE NEW HI-TRACTION LUG RADIAL FROM ARMSTRONG.

Compared with bias ply tires, radials have a larger 'footprint' and deeper tread depth. So, for a given size, there's more tread on the ground. Yes, they can cost more, but the extra expense is more than offset by longer tread life and fuel savings.

Still, a lot of farm equipment owners remain unconvinced.

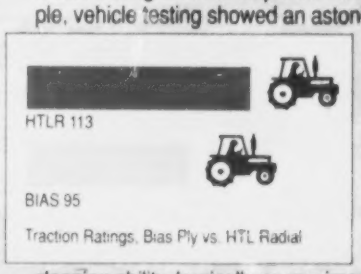
THE CONTROVERSY IS OVER.

Now comes compelling proof of the improved performance of radial tires ... fully implemented for the first time in the new Armstrong Hi-Traction Lug Radial.

Picture a tire with a whopping *18 percent improvement* in traction compared with our bias ply tire. What's more, the HTL Radial delivers a 12 percent improvement in wear even compared with our own agri-tough Super Hi-Power Lug Radial! But compared with our closest competitor...well, frankly, there is no comparison.

WITH SUCH GREAT TRACTION, WHO WOULD EXPECT REDUCED VIBRATION, TOO?

The remarkable thing about the new HTL Radial is that it beats the pants off other radials for reduced tire vibration. Measured against our Super Hi-Power Lug Radial, for example, vehicle testing showed an astonishing *50 to 66 percent* reduction in vibration.



Traction Ratings, Bias Ply vs. HTL Radial

HOW ARMSTRONG'S TIRE DESIGNERS DID IT.

Three of the most important tire performance criteria are traction, vibration, and self-cleaning ability. Ironically as you improve one aspect, trade-offs may occur with the others.

To reduce vibration, for example, Armstrong's tire design team increased the number of lugs on the HTL Radial by about 50 percent. Note in the photo above that the distance between lugs is considerably smaller, so there's a minimum of thumping as the tire rolls from lug to lug.

So far so good. But, with the lugs closer together, special design provisions had to be made to ensure that soil wouldn't clog the space between the lugs. An accomplishment verified by real-life evaluations in various types of soils.

As the HTL Radial's specially curved long bar-medium bar design evolved, it became apparent to the designers that they had achieved a breakthrough – a tire with greatly reduced vibration that not only doesn't compromise traction, but actually improves on it.

DO WE BELIEVE IN THIS TIRE?

The new HTL Radial is a significant technological achievement. One that will undoubtably set standards in tractor tire design for years to come. But equally important, it follows in the Armstrong tradition of building the most reliable tires on or off the road. Which is why the rugged HTL Radial is covered by an *eight-year standard limited warranty*, the most extensive warranty in the industry. Plus it's covered for five years against field hazards and stubble damage! Nobody protects your tire investment like Armstrong.

ALL THE WAYS YOU'LL SAVE.

- Even greater traction means you'll cover more ground in the same amount of time and save on fuel costs.
- Slower wear-out means longer tire life.
- Reduced vibration means fewer vibration-related equipment problems and improved operator comfort.
- And, Armstrong's eight-year standard limited warranty will save you a lot of sleepless nights, too.

Compared with bias tires, radials offer inherently greater traction because of their larger 'footprint'. The new HTL Radial offers improved traction with substantially reduced vibration.

Visit your Armstrong dealer for a look at the amazing new Hi-Traction Lug Radial. And while you're there, see the complete line of Armstrong rhino-tough tires for farm, truck and passenger cars.

Tell them Tuffy the Rhino sent you.

ARMSTRONG

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Circle (4) on Reply Card

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Sales Surge Slows

July sales of larger 2wd tractors slowed considerably during July, compared to earlier months of 1990, but sales of 4wd tractors and combines remained bouyant, continuing the year's trend of large increases for big-ticket items compared to 1989.

With the prospect of inflation and economic slowdown triggered by the Mideast situation, analysts turn a critical eye toward field inventory figures. Data from the Equipment Manufacturers Institute shows June inventory figures about equal to seven months worth of 1990 sales in all market brackets except for the under-40-hp tractors, where the supply is more on the order of 10 months.

Excessive inventory creates a situation where there's more in-brand and cross-brand units available to customers, driving sale prices down while forcing higher inventory carrying costs, and thus reducing dealer profits.

U.S. - UNIT RETAIL SALES

	July			January-July			June 1990 Inventory
Equipment	1990	1989	% Change	1990	1989	% Change	N.A.Factory & U.S. Field
Farm Wheel Tractors:							
2-Wheel Drive							
Under 40 HP	3,769	4,410	(14.5)	28,585	30,417	(6.0)	43,073
40 & Under 100 HP	3,101	2,953	5.0	24,547	21,743	12.9	21,754
100 HP & Over	894	884	1.1	12,725	11,074	14.9	12,142
Total 2-Wheel Drive	**7,764**	**8,247**	**(5.9)**	**65,857**	**63,234**	**4.1**	**76,969**
Total 4-Wheel Drive	**298**	**238**	**25.2**	**3,049**	**2,331**	**30.8**	**2,565**
Total Farm Wheel Tractors	**8,062**	**8,485**	**(5.0)**	**68,906**	**65,565**	**5.1**	**79,534**
Combines							
(Self-Propelled)	980	869	12.8	5,097	3,320	53.5	5,197

Expo Breaks Records

By SCOTT NESBITT

AN ELEVEN growth in attendance pushed the seventh International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo in Louisville over its previous record for participation, according to the sponsoring body, the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute.

The Expo wrap-up reported 24,793 people had showed up at the July 29-31 show, either staffing one of the 594 indoor exhibits or the 139 outdoor exhibits, or strolling the aisles as a visitor.

Visitors came from across the nation and around the globe, with 1,381 being international participants. Among members of the buying audience, the breakdown was: 40 percent retailers/dealers; 19 percent distributors; 16 percent manufacturers reps/agents; 11 percent trade visitors; 9 percent landscapers/commercial mowing contractors; 5 percent merchandise buyers.

The landscaper/commercial mowing contingent was of special interest to the exhibitors who took the 45 outdoor exhibit spaces set aside in a special commercial equipment area located in an area that has a large drainage ditch, making it ideal for testing mowers designed for use on hillsides.

OPEI President Dennis C. Dix asserted that "Expo continues to prove itself as the U.S. marketplace for international trade in lawn and garden products and outdoor power equipment. I truly thought the show had reached its zenith, but I'm delighted it continues to grow."

The show has become a site for competitions, especially the Innovative Products Award sponsored by Lawn & Garden Marketing Magazine. There were 10 awards issued this year from among the 52 products entered by 46 manufacturers.

Overall winner was the zero-turning-radius commercial walk-behind mower from Scag Power Equipment, Inc. The machine's hydrostatic drive allows a zero turn by powering one of the two drive wheels forward while the other is powered in reverse, eliminating the chance of scuffing turf that occurs when the operator of a conventional drive mower locks one wheel and uses it as the pivot point for a U-turn.

Other power equipment winners were the Poulan/Weed Eater for its ClipQuik cordless trimmer; RedMax/Komatsu Zenoah America Inc. for its model EBA 440 backpack power blower with electric start; Shindaiwa Inc. for its Tornado brushcutter blade, which uses teeth somewhat like chainsaw teeth; Technic Tool Corp. for its power pruner, which mounts a chain saw blade or circular cutting blade on the end of a telescoping tube enclosing a solid drive shaft, and the Sipap Electronics Inc. Maintenance Meter, which automatically records usage hours of engines that can't normally be fitted with an hour meter.

Non-powered award winners were Wallace, A Fiskars Co. for both the notch hedge shears and bypass lopper; Koos, Inc. for its 12 lb. jug of Safe Step Ice Melter with spreader cap; and Vemco Inc. for its Sure Pour pouring spout.

Another popular feature of the show, the All-American Engine Repair Championship, drew 250 entrants who showed their mechanical skill, in both written and performance tests, to claim the title of best small-engine mechanic in the nation, in a test sponsored by the Engine Service Association. Winners get cash awards and the engine they repaired in the hands-on contest. The top three winners and finalists in each engine division were:

Briggs & Stratton: Michael Harlan, Victorville, Calif., first; Richard Sawyer, Gallatin, Tenn., second; Timothy Steele, Louisa, Ky., third; Kenneth Smith, Milesburg, Pa., Randy Larson, Lake City, Iowa., and Kevin Covington, Louisville, Ky., finalists.

Tecumseh: Rodney Rom, Butler, Mo., first; Dan Denhard, New Albany, Ind., second; David Scales, Versailles, Ky., third; Ralph Feeback, Arvada, Colo., Dan Rick, Anderson, Ind., and John Fetty, Buckhannon, W. Va., finalists.

Kohler: James Schneider, Olney, Ill., first; Rodney Rom, Butler, Mo, second; Mike Neu, Shelbyville, Ind., third; George Nelson, Fillmore, Ill., George Woodson, Shepherdsville, Ky., and William Hart, Bardstown, Ky., finalists.

Cash prizes for the contest, open to any servicing dealer or mechanic who joins the fray, were: $1,000 first place; $600 second place; $400 third place; $200 finalists. All 17 in the final test kept the engine they repaired.

Expo 91, the eight annual running, is slated for July 28-30, the same Sunday through Tuesday schedule that worked well this year. □

Case Introduces 4-WD Tractors

Case International has introduced a new line of four-wheel drive tractors to U.S. agriculture.

The new 9200 Series line includes five articulated and two rigid-frame models with easier-shifting transmissions, quieter cabs and improved service features.

Some models also have increased horsepower over previous 9100 Series tractors.

Case International is the only farm equipment manufacturer to offer a full-line of four-wheel drive tractors that includes rigid frame and articulated models.

"We spent countless hours in the field with farmers finding out how to improve our product line," says Ron Morishita, Case International four-wheel drive product manager.

The introduction of a new four-wheel drive line continues the process of constant re-evaluation and reinforces the Case commitment to building quality products that give our customers total satisfaction.

"The new models feature "skip-shift" transmissions which shift from first to fourth to sixth to eighth gear in three seconds," Morishita explains.

"This allows the operator to get up to speed faster making planting or incorporating chemicals easier and more accurate. For normal tillage operations and starting out with heavy field loads, the operator may still shift through each gear sequentially."

With the skip-shift controller, a third reverse speed of eight mph is available. "The faster reverse speed improves cycle times and productivity in dozer and silage applications," Morishita says.

The deluxe 9200 Series cab has been enhanced with ROPS post padding, monitor mounting studs, new seat suspension, two convenient storage compartments, side and rear window wipers, a coat hook, sun visor, a beverage holder and new AM/FM radio. Helical gears on the upper transmission shaft assure smooth operation and a quiet operating environment.

All the 9200 Series tractors are protected by an exclusive, full-protection, five year/5,000 hour warranty. The warranty replaces the two year/2,000 hour warranty offered on the 9100 Series four-wheel drive tractors.

A $200 deductible applies to each repair after the first year of ownership.

"The five year/5,000 hour warranty is our way of backing up our tractors' reputation for reliability and durability," Morishita says. "It's also a demonstration of our continuing commitment to help our customers farm profitably after the sale."

The rigid-frame, medium-chassis 9240 and 9260 tractors share over 85 percent of their parts with the new articulated models.

Both of these tractors feature turbocharged, aftercooled engines, full powershift transmissions, redesigned chassis and cab, and a choice of wheels to fit a wide variety of farming operations.

The 9240 is rated at 235 horsepower and the 9260 at 300 horsepower.

"Our new rigid-frame tractors are easy to service with readily available parts," Morishita says.

"The new design incorporates the latest tractor technology into a rigid-frame chassis."

Articulated-frame models include the:

- 9210...200 horsepower.
- 9230...235 horsepower.
- 9250...300 horsepower.
- 9270...335 horsepower.
- 9280...375 horsepower.

"The large-chassis 9270 and 9280 will continue to offer all the best-liked features of the 9170 and 9180 respectively, the most popular

(See CASE, pg. 18)